

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O.11652:N/A
TAGS: ETRD, UR, US, EEW
SUBJECT: CALL BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE CHAVEZ ON
FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KORNIYENKO

SUMMARY: ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR TOURISM
CHAVEZ PAID 30 MINUTE CALL ON FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
KORNIYENKO, MARCH 21, AT LATTER'S INVITATION. CHAVEZ URGED
MORE SOVIET TRAVEL TO U.S., EMPHASIZING VALUE OF TWO-WAY
PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACTS IN ADVANCING INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS. KORNIYENKO, THOUGH AFFABLE, MENTIONED "CRIME"
AND HIGH PRICES IN U.S., LACK OF TRADE AGREEMENT AND
ALLEGED SOVIET PROCLIVITY FOR VACATIONING IN USSR, AS
REASONS WHY LITTLE CHANGE COULD BE EXPECTED DESPITE SOVIET
INTEREST IN DEVELOPING TOURISM AS A MEANS OF BETTER UNDER-
STANDING AMONG PEOPLES. AFTER CHAVEZ MENTIONED IDEA OF
EXCHANGE OF TOURISTS INVOLVING NO HARD CURRENCY COSTS TO
USSR, KORNIYENKO SAID HE WOULD "NOT EXCLUDE" SUCH AN IDEA
FROM THE REALM OF THE POSSIBLE. KORNIYENKO DID NOT RAISE
CONTROVERSIAL POLITICAL ISSUES ALTHOUGH HE MENTIONED "LOST"
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U.S. TRADE. END SUMMARY.

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY CHAVEZ'S CONVERSATION WITH KORNIY-
ENKO, WHO WAS ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER IN ILLNESS OF
GROMYKO, WAS AT SOVIET SUGGESTION. IT FOLLOWED DIRECTLY
UPON HIS CALL ON DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE VIKTOR
IVANOV, THE FOREIGN CURRENCY EXPERT IN THE MINISTRY. WHILE

IN MOSCOW MARCH 19-22, HE ALSO MET WITH CENTRAL TRADE UNION COUNCIL CHIEF OF CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OF TOURIST EXCURSIONS ALEKSEY ABUKOV, CHIEF OF THE ADMINISTRATION FOR FOREIGN TOURISM SERGEY NIKITIN, AND INTOURIST CHIEF VIKTOR BOYCHENKO.

2. KORNIYENKO CAUTIONED CHAVEZ NOT TO HOLD ANY "ILLUSIONS" ABOUT ANY SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN SOVIET TOURISM TO THE UNITED STATES. SOVIET GOVERNMENT DID FAVOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AS MEANS OF DEVELOPING BETTER UNDERSTANDING AMONG PEOPLES, WISHED TO HAVE AMERICAN TOURISTS AND WANTED ITS OWN PEOPLE TO SEE THE U.S. HOWEVER, PRACTICALLY SPEAKING, THERE ARE SOME "FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES," SAID KORNIYENKO. IT WAS MORE NATURAL FOR AMERICANS, WHOSE ROOTS ARE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES, TO GO ABROAD. IN SOVIET CASE, PEOPLE "LIKE TO TRAVEL DOMESTICALLY," HE SAID. ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO THE U.S., MANY OBJECTIVE FACTORS PREVENTED THE FAST DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET TOURISM. AMONG THESE WERE COST OF TRAVEL, AND HE SAID HE WISHED TO TELL CHAVEZ FRANKLY THAT SOVIETS WERE A PROUD PEOPLE AND DID NOT WANT TO BE SUBSIDIZED. MOREOVER, THE SITUATION IN THE U.S. WAS NOT FAVORABLE BECAUSE OF CRIME IN THE STREETS, WHICH WAS KNOWN FROM AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS AND VISITORS, ALIKE. HOWEVER, ALL OF THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT SOVIET GOVERNMENT WAS NOT IN FAVOR OF TOURISM, KORNIYENKO ASSERTED.

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3. ASSISTANT SECRETARY CHAVEZ EXPLAINED THAT WE DID NOT HAVE SUBSIDIES IN MIND BUT DID FAVOR AN EXCHANGE OF PERSONS WHICH WOULD NOT INVOLVE OUTLAYS OF FOREIGN CURRENCY, A SWAP ARRANGEMENT. THIS MIGHT INVOLVE TAKING A GROUP OF PERSONS WITH A SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL INTEREST, LIKE PETROLEUM, ON TOUR IN THE OTHER COUNTRY WHERE THEY COULD LEARN AND ENJOY AT THE SAME TIME. "I WOULD NOT EXCLUDE SUCH AN IDEA FROM BEING REALIZED," KORNIYENKO REPLIED.

4. WHEN CHAVEZ SAID THE U.S. IS INTERESTED IN AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON TOURISM, KORNIYENKO SAID HE FRANKLY ENVISIONED SOME DIFFICULTIES BECAUSE OF THE "DIFFERENT SCALE" (I.E. DISCREPANCY IN NUMBER OF TOURISTS), AS WELL AS BECAUSE US AND USSR STILL DO NOT HAVE NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS. THOUGH TOURISM IS NOT TRADE AS SUCH, IT IS A PART OF COMMERCE, KORNIYENKO SAID. THUS IT WAS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A NORMAL MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS TRADE RELATIONSHIP AS A BASIS FOR TOURISM. HE WAS SURE ASSISTANT SECRETARY CHAVEZ KNEW WHY SUCH A TRADE AGREEMENT DID NOT EXIST SO FAR. HENCE HE FORESAW DIFFICULTIES IN WORKING TOWARDS A TOURISM AGREEMENT.

5. CHAVEZ SUGGESTED THAT A TOURISM AGREEMENT MIGHT BE AN INSTRUMENT TO OPEN A WINDOW, SINCE AN EXCHANGE OF PERSONS WAS NOT QUITE THE SAME THING AS AN EXCHANGE OF GOODS AND SERVICES. KORNIYENKO SAID THAT SOVIETS WOULD NOT MAKE A TOURIST AGREEMENT AS A MEANS OF GETTING A TRADE AGREEMENT. THEY DID NOT HAVE GREATER INTEREST IN THE LATTER THAN THE U.S. "I CAN TELL YOU HOW MUCH TRADE YOU HAVE LOST" (DUE TO JACKSON/VANIK AMENDMENT), KORNIYENKO SAID, BUT HE COULD NOT RECALL THE FIGURE AND FINALLY SAID "BILLIONS, NOT MILLIONS." THE SOVIETS COULD WAIT UNTIL THE USG WAS READY TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION. CHAVEZ

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REITERATED SINCERITY OF OUR INTEREST IN EXPANDING THE EXCHANGE OF PERSONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. KORNIYENKO AGREED THAT TRAVEL SHOULD BE PROMOTED THROUGH PRACTICAL STEPS.

6. KORNIYENKO DID NOT RAISE ANY CONTROVERSIAL POLITICAL SUBJECTS. ASIDE FROM HIS REFERENCE TO CRIME IN THE U.S. AND THE TRADE AGREEMENT, HE WAS AFFABLE IN MOOD THOUGH NOT VERY ENCOURAGING ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR GREATER SOVIET TOURISM. TOON

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